1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



222 a honey ax, and probably some liana to assist in the climbing of the tree where the bees have been found. The Pygmies smoke out the bees by thrusting glowing embers, wrapped in a leaf, into the hive. Then the hole is enlarged with the ax until the Pygmy can thrust in his hand and arm and take out the honey. Schebesta says [776] that the honey gatherer throws some to the God [782] of the Forest before he or anyone else is allowed to taste it. (A similar practice is attributed to [462] archers when they divide the game.) If the bees are the kind that construct a hive in a hole in the ground, then the honey is collected by women. This kind of bee does not sting, but the tree bee does. The honey is distributed by the woman to members of the local band as she thinks fit, the children receiving the largest share.

857 The direct contribution of the children to the 22 food quest is mediocre. Apart from such help as they give their parents in hunting and gathering activities, the children amuse themselves by hunting forest rats and mice with miniature bows and arrows. Anything they catch in this

[P.175-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti





way is theirs to cook and eat without having to be shared. 852 22.

## Drinks, Narcotics, and Stimulants 276

As stimulants Schebesta mentions *bangi* (hemp), its counterpart from the forest plant *medeaka*, and the kola nut. Palm wine, banana wine, and tobacco are available only from the villagers' plantations.

## Food Restriction

Clan totems (nearly always animal, rarely vegetable) are always taboo; even indirect contact must be avoided. There are other ta- 262

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 176-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[p.176-A]

262 boos, mostly acquired during initiation, not connected with the clan totem. These two classes of taboos are responsible for what food restrictions there are.

## Trade

433 439 177 • 22 The food quest is, in Schebesta's words, the alpha and omega of Mbuti economy. It is a day-to-day economy. The supposed uncertainty of adequate supply is given as the reason for the alleged dependency of the Mbuti on the villagers. At times the Mbuti have no food; at others, they have an excess. But living in a symbiotic relationship with the villagers, the Pygmies are able to maintain a steady diet, relying on the villagers in times of shortage and in times of plenty supplying them with forest produce. According to Schebesta, their relationship is based on this exchange. The Pygmy not only has come to rely on village plantations to supplement his own inadequate diet, but he has come to rely on villager-manufactured tools and utensils. Jadin (1936) says that the Pygmies know no resources other than those available through hunting and gathering, despite villager domination.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 212-C] DAILY LIFE

The food quest, as with the archers, is the primary concern of daily life among the net hunters. The net hunt is considerably more rewarding than the other form of hunt, although it probably occupies as much time. Care and maintenance of the nets are also laborious and time-consuming. Women gather not only as they accompany the hunt, but also on those days when the hunt stays behind in the camp. The children make a not inconsiderable contribution to the family food quest. A common occupation on a non-hunting day is for men and women to assist each other in the making of twine from *nkusa* vine. This twine is used primarily in the repair of hunting nets.

As with the archers, elimination takes place not far from the camp. Refuse is never carried away; it is merely thrown behind the huts. These practices not merely create an unpleasant smell after some weeks, but also attract armies of ants. The Mbuti themselves, however, keep their bodies scrupulously clean, and the favorite recreation of the children is playing about in the shallow streams. The men assert that they can all swim but are never seen doing so; they are certainly much afraid of deep water.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which should be mentioned here, though it seems unique and known only to net-hunters as far as I could ascertain. The ritual involves the building of a fire, with much greater care and concern than the hunting fire or the *molimo* fire, and it is believed specifically that the correct performance of this ritual will lead the Mbuti to honey and/or bring the bees, and their honey, closer to the Mbuti. A full description is given in the section on religion and magic (pp. 231–33). Here it need only be said that the preparations, including the digging of small trenches for water and the use of special woods and leaves, are designed to give the maximum amount of smoke. The lighting of the fire is accompanied by blowing on the *madé*[4] (efe: *segbe*) whistles, through which water is first poured.

All being taken into consideration, the relative lack of magic or ritual associated with food quest, the lack of interest shown in certain readily available forms of food supply such as fish, and the lack of food taboos all confirm the abundance of forest foods and the adequacy of Mbuti technology. This is important in considering the over-all economic system.

## ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF TERRITORY

While the environment does not, through areas of shortage or abundance, determine the location of hunting bands, it does provide natural boundaries which form convenient borders between each hunting band. The total territory is more than ample for the total population, and the even distribution of game and vegetable foods means that there are no preferential areas that might make for rivalry between one band and the next. There is, in any case, a safety factor in that the bands are arranged side by side, in several vast circles, in the center of each of which the boundaries are so loosely drawn that there is effectively a no-man's-land, in which anyone may hunt and where bands occasionally, though rarely, may come in contact with each other.

The only territory to be considered, then, is that of the individual hunting band. This is again, in all cases except possibly the area

[4] The *madé* is a conical pipe, open at both ends, made of two hollowed-out cross-sections cut lengthwise, bound together either by *nkusa* twine or by strips of vine. The pouring of water, which is comparable to the pouring of water through the *molimo* trumpet (see Chapter 14) may have ritual significance, but is explained invariably and unhesitatingly as being necessary simply to get a better sound. It swells the wood and binds the sections closer to each other.